

1 ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

2 An interactive television system includes "connected"  
3 receiver units capable of establishing bi-directional  
4 connections to remote information stores, such as Web servers,  
5 and "disconnected" receiver units unequipped to make such  
6 connections. The system supports the use of broadcast triggers  
7 that include connectivity values indicating whether an  
8 information resource identified by a trigger refers to  
9 "connected content" or "disconnected content." The term  
10 "connected content" refers to information resources that  
11 require bi-directional connections to remote information  
12 stores; the term "disconnected content" refers to information  
13 resources, such as a locally stored program guide, that do not  
14 require such bi-directional connections. Disconnected receiver  
15 units identify and reject connected-content triggers by  
16 examining connectivity values broadcast as part of triggers.  
17 Thus, content providers can broadcast connected-content  
18 triggers to connected and disconnected receiver units without  
19 interrupting disconnected receiver units with links to  
20 inaccessible content. Furthermore, the ability to distinguish  
21 between connected and disconnected content allows vendors who  
22 sell or lease receiver units to offer a lower level of service  
23 to those customers who do not wish to pay for the ability to  
24 access connected content.